
Report To:	Inverclyde Council	Date:	23 February 2012
Report By:	Corporate Director Education and Communities	Report No:	IC/01/12/AH/AW
Contact Officer:	Alana Ward, Libraries Manager	Contact No:	01475 712347
Subject:	Proposal to Appoint an Archivist		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to advertise for a Council Archivist.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 At its meeting of 20 January 2011, the Regeneration Committee agreed that a full refurbishment of the Watt Library and McLean Museum should be carried out, that the Council would consider making up to £4m available for the project over the period 2011-15 as part of the budget setting process, and that partnership funding would be sought from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), amongst other sources.
- 2.2 In terms of potential HLF funding, the collections contained within the Watt Library and the McLean Museum, and how they are preserved, stored, and made available to the public, are as important as the conservation of the building itself.
- 2.3 While the library and museum resources are properly preserved, stored and curated, the Archive collection is not. Legislation places a duty on local authorities to make proper arrangements for the preservation and management of the records it holds. The Council therefore requires to consider whether this duty would be best fulfilled by employing a person with the appropriate professional expertise in archives management, to properly curate the collection.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Council approve the creation and advertising of a 0.5 post of Archivist, temporary for two years in the first instance, funded by the Watt Trust.

Albert Henderson
Corporate Director Education & Communities

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 At its meeting of 20 January 2011, the Regeneration Committee agreed that a full refurbishment of the Watt Library and McLean Museum should be carried out, that the Council would consider making up to £4m available for the project over the period 2011-15 as part of the budget setting process, and that partnership funding would be sought from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), amongst other sources.
- 4.2 Led by Angela Edwards, Head of Educational Planning & Culture, a working group has been set up to consider how to take the development forward. This group has met several times with representatives from the HLF, who have been advising the group on Inverclyde Council's potential funding application.
- 4.3 The HLF supports projects which will provide lasting benefits for both heritage and people. In order to assess if a project will deliver against these aims, they will consider not only the extent to which the project will result in conservation benefits, but also the project's scope to enable people to learn about and take part in their heritage. Therefore, in terms of potential HLF funding, the collections contained within the Watt Library and the McLean Museum, and how they are preserved, stored, and made available to the public, are as important as the conservation of the building itself.
- 4.4 There are three principal collections contained within the building: the collections of the McLean Museum, the (book) collection of the Watt Library; and archival collections from the local area. While the Museum and Library collections are properly stored and curated by staff with professional expertise, the Archive collection is contained within boxes, piled high from floor to ceiling, in a room in the Watt Library with no environmental controls or access to the public. It is not curated and has not been catalogued to national standards.
- 4.5 The creation of an Inverclyde archive and local/family history centre is essential to ensure that the area's documentary heritage can be properly managed, conserved and made available, and it will be a key part of the eventual bid to the HLF. In the meantime, the Council requires to consider whether it should employ a person with the appropriate professional expertise in archives management, to properly curate the collection.
- 4.6 Section 53 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1994 places a duty on local authorities to make proper arrangements for the preservation and management of the records it holds. Furthermore, the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 will require public sector bodies to produce and implement records management plans with the agreement of the Keeper of the Records of Scotland. Irrespective of the potential HLF bid, the creation of this post will assist the Council to fulfil its statutory obligations.
- 4.7 A job description and person specification for an Archivist have been prepared, and have been considered by the Council's job evaluation team. The post has been evaluated at Grade F. If approved, the Archivist would work at the McLean Museum, as part of the Libraries & Museum team reporting to the Libraries Manager.

5.0 PROPOSALS

- 5.1 It is proposed to create a 0.5 post of Archivist. The post will be on a temporary basis for two years in the first instance, and will be funded from the Watt Trust. The post will be part of the Libraries & Museum team, reporting to the Libraries Manager, in the Educational Planning & Culture service.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Finance:

Financial Implications – Annually Recurring Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Full Year 12/13	Full Year 13/14	Total	Virement From (if Applicable)	Other Comments
Watt Trust	Employee costs	£12,600	£12,600	£25,200	n/a	Funded by Watt Trust – no cost to Council

- 6.2 Personnel: The post would be advertised on the national recruitment portal.
- 6.3 Legal: It is noted that it is proposed to fund this post from the Watt Trust. The Trust provisions are specific in respect of the purposes for which its funds may be employed. Providing that the person employed in the event of this request being approved is engaged solely in connection with trust purposes, then the proposal is permissible in terms of the provisions of the Trust.
- 6.4 Equalities: There are no Equalities implications.